

## THE TRAITOR

"Tell me piggie go a market!" she broke out again, her voice rising in imperious demand.

The curtains were now drawn partially aside. He stood like one fascinated at the unexpected scene.

With her profile turned to him, the mother strove anxiously to divert the child's mind in the hope that precious sleep might come to it again; but in vain every effort; with constant reiteration, the baby rhyme was demanded.

And now a strange curiosity took possession of him, and he stood looking on and listening with bated breath.

Giving way to the child's importunity, the mother took from under the clothing a feverish little foot, pressed it passionately to her cool cheek, and then began, brokenly:

"This dear little piggie went to market" ("Oh, my sick darling!" she whispered under her breath), "while this other little piggie stayed at home—and—"

But the memory of what was being called up, coupled with the keen, nervous tension possessing her, was beyond power of control, and she broke into choking sobs, kissing the little foot in piteous abandon.

"Me take my mamma a market. . . . My mamma no cry. . . . My papa no leave my mamma." The sound of the mother's distress had had the feared effect, and the words were called out in wilder babbling than before.

Suddenly the child sighed in exhaustion, moaned tearfully, and a moment later was breathing in heavy slumber.